Nuggets of News

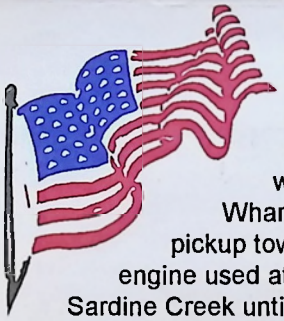
Gold Hill Historical Society
P. O. Box 26
504 First Avenue
Gold Hill OR 97525
541-855-1182

April/May/June 2002

Newsletter of events, hisorical stories and photographs for members and friends of the Gold Hill Historical Society - Established 1986
Meetings are held 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
at the Historical Society Museum, 504 First Avenue, Gold Hill, Oregon (except for August when the Annual Picnic/Potluck is held at noon on the 3rd Sunday).
Museum hours Memorial Day through Labor Day - Noon to 4 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday.
Labor Day through Memorial Day - Noon to 4 p.m. Friday through Sunday
Closed Holidays - Admission FREE (Donations accepted.)

GOLD DUST DAY PARADE, JUNE 1st "RED, WHITE, AND BLUE IN 2002"

A patriotic theme has been chosen for this year's Gold Dust Day on Saturday, June 1, 2002. Grand Marshalls for the parade will be members of Jackson County District #3 firefighters. Gold Hill Historical Society members Barbara and Cliff Finnie, Gold Hill Citizens of the Year 2001, will be riding in the parade. Ted Wharton will drive his beautiful Jeep pickup towing the John Deere stamp mill engine used at the Lucky Bart Mine on Sardine Creek until 1975. The five-stamp mill this engine powered is now on the Museum grounds. Museum volunteers dressed in pioneer finery will accompany Ted in the truck.



Stop at the Museum on Gold Dust Day and share the feature exhibit about the Miller and Newton families, early pioneers in this area. See the trunk these families brought west with vintage quilts displayed inside. If you have a **family quilt** that you can **share** with us for this exhibit, please call Gloria Wood at the Museum.

Young visitors to Gold Dust Day might enjoy churning butter, grinding wheat, or doing laundry at the Museum. We are open our regular hours from 12 to 4 .m. on Gold Dust Day. The Museum's shady yard is open for all to enjoy.

TREASURES THAT TELL A STORY

Economic depression, hopes for a better life, available free or inexpensive land, and later the lure of gold prompted thousands of people to move westward to Oregon country beginning in the 1840s.

Few possessions could be taken beyond the bare necessities, but most pioneer famlies brought their treasured quilts. Some were made especially for the journey. Othres might have been given as wedding or friendship gifts.

Quilts were used as bedding, to line or insulate the walls of wagons, to decorate and serve as privacy barriers, as a means to share cultural identity, as burial shrouds, and as items used to trade for supplies and for toll payments.

Whether they were made before the journey, along the trail, or in celebration of a new home in the west, each quilt tells a story. All we have to do is look and listen.

Cross, Mary Bywater. *Treasures in the Trunk*, Rutledge Hill Press, Nashville, 1993. "Pattern of a Journey," *On to Oregon*, Southern Oregon Historical Society

See Page 4
"Round Ball to Bullets" by Don Moore, GHHS member.

Next Meeting: April 17, 2002, 6:30 p.m. Please ATTEND!
WALLY IVERSON, LAST OWNER/PUBLISHER OF GOLD HILL NEWS WILL BE THERE.
YOU CAN ASK HIM ABOUT OLD GOLD HILL IN THE 30's.

MAY DAY MEMORIES

The first of May brought celebrations to local Gold Hill school yards. Girls wore their prettiest dresses with each girl hoping to be chosen Queen of May. The medival tradition of a Maypole dance is shown here being performed in 1908 at Dardenelles. The Maypole was in celebration of the passing of winter into spring's renewal of life. Ribbons and streamers carried by the dancers were woven around the Maypole until it was covered with color. Another popular tradition was the gathering of wild flowers to be placed in baskets and secretly hung on door handles or placed on porches as lovely May Day surprises for special relatives or friends.

Hopping, Jane Watson, *The Pioneer Lady's Country Kitchen,* Villard Books, New York, 1988

ROCK POINT CEMETERY CLEAN-UP

This year, the annual clean-up will be on Saturday, May18, 2002, from 9 a.m. until dusk. The traditional Potluck Lunch will be at noon. Remember to bring your tools, eating utensils, chairs, and of course, your potluck dish!

Community clean-up of the cemetery is an historic tradition kept alive by the generous donation of time by devoted and energetic local volunteers over many years. The following invitation was extended to volunteers in the April 17, 1915, issue of *The Gold Hill News*:

"Nature dedicated a beautiful site to the Rock Point cemetery, a resting place between the hills and the river within whispering distance of the latter. That a certain proportion of actual workand improvement is necessary to keep the grounds at a standard beauty will not be denied. J. W. Hayes, acting for the Odd Fellow lodge, has proposed a day to be set aside for this purpose and named the date as Thursday, April 29th. At that time, through the contributed labor of those interested, the old cemetery and the new will be cleared of brush and otherwise put in sightly shape. Volutneers for the worthy work are solicited."

For more information on this year's clean-up, contact Marge Martin, Cemetery Sexton, at 541-855-1559.

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

"First observed during the Civil War, Memorial Day was officially designated a date for honoring the graves of Union soldiers in 1868 by Major General John A. Logan, Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic. Composed of Union vetereans, the G.A.R. served as a fraternal and charitable organization in towns across the country caring for destitute members and their widows, promoting patriotism, and tending the graves of the dead for decades following the war."

Medford Mail Tribune,

This photo was taken at a local encampment in Gold Hill around 1890. *SOHS #8703*

Newsletter Items

Museum newsletter editor s need <u>your</u> news! Please let Gloria Wood in the Museum office know of any ideas/information/ photos/tidbits you would like in the "Nuggets of News."

Gloria Wood & Barbara Finnie, Editors

Board of Directors 2002

Cindy Faubion, President
Ida Tilley, Vice President
Janet Sessions, Secretary
Maureen Smith, Treasurer
Ted Wharton
Lyn Parker
Barbara Finnie
Cliff Finnie
Activities Director: Goria Wood

SMALL GAME HUNTER'S PARADISE
By Ted Wharton
Written November 6, 1936
(Slightly edited January 2002)

The summer of 1934, I was staying with Mark Campbell and his parents on their Sardine Creek ranch. Between chores in the hayfields and garden we would get to go on overnight camp trips. This is the account of one of those ventures, of two 15-year-old boys with their .22 rifles and camping gear, looking for adventure far from civilization.

It was Thursday, July 4, 1934. We stood at the foot of a mountain so high, so steep, so rugged and so precipice-like that it fairly made a person gasp to gaze at its distant jagged peak. It was Skeleton Mountain, so called because of its bare, rugged shape and appearance. It was early in the morning and the first rays of sunlight were reflecting from the sparse clouds overhead. Although it was in July, there had been a rain the night before, leaving the earth slightly soggy and the grass glistening with tiny beads of water sufficient to soak shoes and pants legs. Around us were gigantic oak and maple trees, some smashed and twisted while others stood tall and erect in defiance to the mountain above. Behind us stretched Rocky Gulch, which we had just come up, piled with huge boulders and broken tree trunks. These boulders, through the action of frost and erosion, had swept from the heights of Skeleton Mountain in gigantic leaps and bounds, smashing trees, dislodging smaller stones and thundering to a stop in the nearly flat gulch below.

Although Mark and I had lived on Sardine Creek, within three miles of Skeleton Mountain, for two years, we had never climbed it. We were now loaded with our pack sacks, blanket rolls and guns while our dog Jupiter frolicked around us, "raring to go." After selecting our route we started to climb up the rugged and precarious hillside, with no idea were we would be by night.

From a distance Skeleton Mountain looks small but we had different ideas after two hours of hard climbing had carried us less than half way up. We dropped our loads in exhaustion and even the dog Jupiter was willing to lie down to rest. The sun was well up by now and with not a cloud left in the sky, it promised good weather, and for us, a quiet and peaceful 4th of July. I climbed out on a jagged promontory of rock to get a better view and accidentally dislodged a large boulder about the size of a small washtub. There was a rumble of smaller stones as the boulder leaped down the steep mountain, gaining momentum with every bound. It struck an outcropping of rock, sending a spray of sparks and dirt into the air, bounded high and crashed on, a demon of destruction. Its speed increased nearly double as it dropped over a small cliff and into the air, then crashed with a roar in the very crown of a huge, stately oak. The oak split asunder and the rock, now out of our sight, crashed onward to destruction, coming to a stop with a terrific roar in the boulder-strewn gulch below. It was tremendous, that struggle between forces, nature against nature, and the god of gravity claiming its victims as it always has and always will. It seemed ridiculous that the boulder could cover, in a few moments, the territory it had taken us two hours to traverse on the way up.

We shouldered our packs and eagerly started on, Jupiter bounding ahead in glee. We reached the top at 10:30 a.m., fairly running with sweat and otherwise depleted. The view was, well, it was just too spectacular to put into words. It was like looking at a topographical map, which shows the mountains in raised relief.

While taking in the view we heard the shrill cry of a red tailed hawk. Looking around, we saw a pair swooping thru the tops of some dead snags, killed by the forest fires of 1930. Suddenly they both dove out of sight, no doubt seeking their prey, possibly a squirrel.

After sliding and jumping down the other side of the peak, we entered the upper fork of Drummond's Gulch. Just as we were entering a thicket of buck brush, I heard a thunder of wings, followed by a shot from behind me. There was a whistling over my head as a grouse sailed by, struck a tree, and fell to the ground dead, with a bullet from my pal's gun in its vitals. It was a fine grouse; the best I had seen that season and the first game of the day. After a continuous descent for a quarter of a mile, the ground leveled off to a great extent, with a small creek cutting a gulch out of the land. We were walking briskly down a narrow path by the creek when a silver-gray squirrel darted up a large alder tree. I took quick aim and brought him down with a bullet to his head. At about 5 p.m. we came to a dense thicket of second growth cedar, so thick that the dog had difficulty in getting through. After walking around the thicket we found a deer trail leading into it to a bubbling spring draining out of a seam in a rock ledge. Around the spring was a small clearing with the water running off to one side, an ideal spot for our camp.

While I built a fire and cleaned our grouse, Mark made our beds on a high and dry piece of ground above the spring. After a hearty supper of fried grouse, eggs, coffee and pan bread, in the semi-darkness we rolled into our beds for a real night's sleep in God's country.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from Page 3)

Morning found us awake and out hunting up a side gulch close to camp. With the aid of Jupiter, we located several gray squirrels in a grove of giant Douglas fir. After considerable maneuvering we managed to get one apiece. A gray squirrel, when in the tip of a tree, especially a fir, is nearly impossible to see and even harder to hit. On the way back we separated and when I reached camp, Jupiter was alone guarding two dead squirrels that were left on a stump there, but Mark was nowhere to be seen. I cooked breakfast for us while waiting for him, figuring he had gone off after another squirrel. When breakfast was ready, I shouted for him. Hearing a laugh from overhead, I perceived him perched in the top of a nearby alder tree by the spring, reading a magazine. He took it as a fine joke, getting out of having to help cook breakfast, but I got my revenge by letting him wash the dishes.

I cleaned the three squirrels (which was always my job), wrapped them in newspapers and placed them in the pack, while Mark rolled up the bedrolls and read an old funny paper. Then we packed up our few utensils, shouldered our loads and left camp with the resolve to come back again for a longer stay (which we did a month later). Mark was an expert hiker and could out-walk anyone in the country, therefore he set the pace, which I sometimes found too fast. I prefer to stop here and there to view the works of nature. Mark used to accuse me of tiring out easily until I once beat him climbing a mountain.

After we had traveled about two miles or so, we came upon an old ranch house surrounded by dilapidated outbuildings. We were just rounding the old barn when Mark (who is always on the alert, except when reading), gave a hearty and lively jump to one side. Just around the corner, in a tight coil, was a huge rattlesnake, ready to strike at full length. Near at hand were several ground or digger squirrel holes, which he was probably intending to raid. After securing a good stout club apiece, we attacked the sidewinder. Accompanied by fierce yips and growls from Jupiter, we laid the snake out dead. I smashed his head thoroughly, and then Mark removed his 14 rattles and button. I then skinned the snake. (I pulled the hide over my belt, which I wore to school in the fall to the amusement of hearing the girls squeal.) I have known men who claim to catch rattlers barehanded, but I have no especial hankering for the occupation.

We followed Drummonds Gulch on down and came out above the forks of Sardine Creek, about two miles from home, as the crow flies. While hiking down the creek we came upon a covey of mountain quail, three of which we bagged. When we were a mile from home we took a shortcut across the base a hill. Just as we rounded the foot of the hill, a fine buck deer jumped up in front of us. We were not equipped with heavy enough guns, so we let him out of our sight. Here we had just traveled through wild forests where deer abound and didn't see a single one, and then within half a mile from home we got an easy chance at one.

In a few minutes we were at home, just in time to sit down for dinner. If you ever want a really tiring adventure in wild and tough country, just climb Skeleton Mountain.

Postscript: According to Ted Wharton, he and his friend, Mark Campbell, were told the name Skeleton Mountain by an elderly man George Bailey. Bailey's property was adjacent to the property of William Campbell, Mark's father. Mark and Ted would visit with Bailey at his cabin in what was then called Bailey Canyon off Sardine Creek. (Rocky Gulch was north of Bailey Canyon.) Ted stated that if you are at Dardanelles and fix your eyes across the river to the highest peak and then look for a grassy open area on one side with trees on the other, you would see what is known as Skeleton Mountain. Places often were given names by local people and many times these names did not became official names. So it is with Skeleton Mountain – you won't find this name on any map.

Round Ball to Bullets by Don Moore

The history and use of 1850s muzzle-loading (slug gun) rifles was the subject of a most informative presentation by Don Moore of Gold Hill on Friday, March 22, 2002. He demonstrated the use of powder and the cumbersome delay in reloading in order to get another shot. When other rifles, including the popular Winchester, were developed, the slug guns fell out of favor. They continued in use until sometime between 1900 and 1910 when more efficient rifles started to become available. According to Don, the slug guns are still the most accurate of all rifles, however, in spite of being heavy and awkward. Collector slug guns are available today for anywhere from $2,000 to $20,000 with a few new slug guns being manufactured for around $1,600.

Want to see a demonstration? On April 20, 2002, starting at 10 a.m., you can see the 8-member Oregon Slug Gun Club shoot at the Josephine County Sportsman's Park near Merlin, Oregon. Formed in about 1980, Don has been a member of the Club for the last 11 years. For more information, call Don at 855-1891.

WHAT A GIRL SHOULD KNOW

To sew
To cook
To mend
To be gentle
To value time
To dress neatly
To keep a secret
To be self-reliant
To avoid idleness
To mind the baby
To darn stockings
To respect old age
To make good bread
To keep a house tidy
To control her temper
To be above gosspiping
To make a home happy
To humor a cross old man
To marry a man for his worth
To be a help mate to a husband
To take plenty of active exercise
To see a mouse without screaming
To be light-hearted and fleet-footed
To wear shoes that don't cramp the feet
To be a womanly woman under all circumstances.

(Originally printed in *The Springfield Union* and reprinted in *The Ashland Tidings* and other papers in 1889.)

WEDDING CUSTOMS

Many customs are associated with the old British rhyme that follows. The meaning of each phrase follows the bold print.

Something old . . . a link to the past; continuity.
Something new . . . optimism for the future.
Something borrowed . . . object from a happily married friend or relative.
Something blue . . . purity and fidelity.
And a Penny or Six Pence in Your Shoe. . . probably for a prosperous future.

"Bride and Groom," *Medford Mail Tribune,* Feb. 14, 2002.

WEDDING BELLS

Three of the eleven children of Jacob and Sarah Neathammer were wed in the year 1884. The family had settled on a homestead at the mouth of Sardine Creek in 1855. Jacob continued to purchase prime farm land and his holdings soon approached 400 acres.

Most weddings took place at home, as did that of Sarah and Ellen Neathammer on April 9, 1884. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Moses A. Williams, a circuit-riding preacher, who recorded the following information in his diary:

"At Rock Point. Walked up to Mr. Jacob Neathammer's and joined his two daughters in marriage. Miss Sarah, the elder, to Mr. Eugene S. Trumble, and Miss Ellen E., the younger, to Mr. Julius C. Trumble, two brothers and two sisters. Had a good breakfast, or rather, an early dinner. Then I rode up to the Gold Hill station, and after waiting some time, a gravel train came along. They allowed me to go aboard, and brought me up to Medford before sundown. . . "

The Trumble brothers owned the only grist mill in the area. It was located one mile north of Gold Hill on the road to Sams Valley. The mill was later purchased by J. J. Houck, who added a quartz mill and electric light plant.

On July 2, 1884, Joshua Neathammer married Emma Haymond, as recorded by this Peter Britt photo taken in Jacksonville.

Williams, *Diary*, 9 April 1884, as referenced in feature by Sherry Wachter, *Southern Oregon Heritage Today,* December 2001

"Mother of Oregon"

Tabitha Mofett Brown; brother-in-law Capt. John Brown; son Orus, who had spent almost four years exploring Oregon Country; daughter, Pherne; son-in-law Virgil Pringle, who kept a journal of their wagon trek westward; and "thirteen assorted children" (1) joined forty wagons headed West on the Oregon Trail.

After passing Ft. Hall, Idaho, they met Jesse Applegate, who convinced many of the emigrants to follow a more southerly route through which he would lead them to save time reaching the Willamette Valley and also avoid dangerous travel on the Columbia River. Three years earlier, the Applegate's had lost two young male family members while on the Columbia River portion of their northern route to Oregon. This cut-off became known as the Applegate Trail and developed into a principal route south into the California gold fields and then north into southern Oregon's fertile Rogue Valley."

After encountering extreme hardships and near starvation on this new unbroken trail, Mrs. Brown and her family reached Salem on Christmas Day 1846.

Oregon Trail Map, *On To Oregon over the Oregon/ Applegate Trails,* Southern Oregon Historical Society, 1993.

The following are excerpts from Mr. Pringle's diary when the party entered the Rogue Valley (2):

"*Sunday, October 11 - The valley opens and we pass some very pretty locations. Timber in a great many varieties, some entirely new to me. Make 10 miles and camp at a considerable sized creek, the best camp we have had for several days. Road very good. High mountains around. 10 miles.*

"*Monday, October 12 - Travel 15 miles of very good Mountain country and camp in a fine prairie without water. 15 miles.*

"*Tuesday, October 13 - Move about one mile to a spring and spend the day to explore ahead, the road not being marked. 1 miles.*

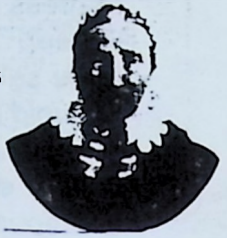
"*Wednesday, October 14 - Travel 12 miles of good road and camp on Rogue River, a beautiful, pure stream about fifty yards wide, but shut in by mountains. 12 miles.*

"*Thursday, October 15 - Move down the river 10 miles and camp. Plenty of Indians about, but none come near. Lose some cattle by them. 10 miles.*

"*Friday, October 16 - Cross Rogue River about 4 miles from last camp. Food good. Camp on the right bank.*"

While visiting son, Orus, in West Tualatin Plains, (renamed Forest Grove), Tabitha "leanred of the great suffering and death that resulted in many orphaned children during the Great Migration of 1843." (1) Brown told Reverend Harvey Clark that she "would establish myself in a comfortable house and receive all poor children and be a mother to them." By that summer, she was watching over thirty boys and girls from ages four to twenty-one. This number increased after the discovery of gold in California in 1848 when parents seeking riches left off-spring behind.

Oregon government officials established Tualatin Academy near Brown's orphanage in 1850. Four years later the name was changed to Pacific University. She cared for students as well as her orphans.



"In 1987, at the request of the Oregon Retired Teachers Association, the Oregon Legislature cited Tabitha Moffett Brown as the "official symbol of Mother of Oregon."

(1) Dodge, Steve. "Tabitha Moffett Brown," *Oregon Heritage*, Winter/Spring 1995.
(2) Pringle, Virgil. Diary written along the Oregon/Applegate Trail, 1846. Copy given to GHHS by great-granddaughter, Bonnie Smith.

Greetings to One and All,

It's that time of year again when the weather warms up and we all begin entertaining good thoughts of spending more time with our hands in the soil. The other evening my husband, Bill, and I were at the Historical Society to take care of some paperwork when he looked at me and said, "Remember when G.H.H.S. used to meet in the library? Well look at where the society is now!" And he was right. All the years of volunteer efforts have really paid off. The house looks wonderful. I urge all of you to stop by for a visit to see just how much has been accomplished in recent years. Also, as we turn our attention to the yard of our beautiful home, I ask you all to look for heirloom plants and share a start. Eventually we would like to have a garden with the "pioneer plants" labeled so visitors could learn about the heritage of the plants at the same time. Again, please take the time to stop by and enjoy our beautiful building and the interesting displays.

All the best,

Cindy Tilley Faubion. President

In Memorium

John W. Steelman was born in Springfield, Ohio on February 7, 1842. At age 20, he was enrolled as a sergeant in Co. I, 119th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry on the 22nd day of September, 1862, at Camp Pequa, Ohio for a three-year period. His occupation was listed as that of cooper. Before being "Discharged on account of wounds on May 30th, 1865" he was promoted to 1st sergeant. As a Civil War veteran, he received a pension of $24.00 a month. His "Honorably Discharged" certificate from the Oregon Soldiers' Home of 6 Feb 1918 lists him as five feet, 9-1/2 inches high, light complexion, blue eyes, and gray hair.

In 1914, Mr. Steelman married Winona Steelman, widow of his brother Frank. They resided on the Steelman homestead on Galls Creek where John farmed until his final illness. He succumbed to pneumonia on Janury 28, 1926, aged 84 years, 11 months and 20 days. Funeral services were conducted by the Grand Army of the Republic (G. A. R.) at the Rock Point Cemetery on January 30, 1926. He was active in the G.A. R. until his death, attending meetings throughout Oregon.

He is buried in the I.O.O.F. portion of the Rock Point Cemetery in "Civil War Row" with nine of his comrades: JNO McCaughlm, Co K 22nd V.R.C.; James Luttrell, Co F 3rd Cal. Inf.; Wm Smith Co D 59 Ind. Inf.; Elijah Kennicutt Co L 110 Ohio Inf; Corpl. And. W.J.T. Smith Co. D 124 Ill. Inf.; Geo. H. Patrick, Co. H 4 1A Cav.; Ezra Webber, Co I 1 MO. Cav.; W.S. Coverdale Co I 113 Ill. Inf.; and J.J. McCord Co B 1st Oregon Cav.

The Steelman Homestead on Galls Creek, Gold Hill Historical Society Neg. #800.

Winnie Nichols, a Gold Hill Historical Society member, is a step granddaughter of John Steelman. She lives in the Gold Hill area.

Gold Hill Historical Society Membership/Renewal/Volunteer Form

Name _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

☐ Family Membership $6.00 per year
New membership,. Welcome!

☐ Family Membership $6.00 per year
Renewal. Thank you!

☐ Contribution

☐ Yes, I would like to volunteer

Return form to:

Gold Hill Historical Society
P. O. Box 26
504 First Avenue
Gold Hill OR 97525

A SPECIAL DAY FOR MOTHER

In 1892, Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" proposed a special day be set aside to honor motherhood. It wasn't until 1907 that Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia was able to bring about an official observance of Mother's Day. She is the one that chose the second Sunday in May, as well as originating the custom of the wearing of a carnation to honor your mother whether living or deceased. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson officially proclaimed Mother's Day a national holiday.

Museum Program Schedule
April, May, and June 2002

April 19, 9:30 a.m. - *Gold Hill Pre-School - "The Railroad and Other Transportation. Story and hands-on activities.*

May - *"Heritage Quilts" (Check time and date with Museum -- not yet set at press time.)*

June 1 - *Gold Dust Day, "Red, White and Blue in 2002"*

Upcoming Museum Meetings, 6:30 p.m.

April 17
May 15
June 19
July 17
Annual Meeting, August 18,
Potluck - 12 Noon

Society Goals

The Gold Hill Historical Society's goal is to collect, document, and preserve the history of Gold Hill and area through oral histories, photographs,

Gold Hill Historical Society
P. O. Box 26
504 First Avenue
Gold Hill OR 97525

EUGENE, OR 974
PM
APR
2002

Eagle Point Historical Soc. & Muse
301 N. Royal Ave.
PO Box 201
Eagle Point, Oregon 97524

97524X0201